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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

GEORGE HERBERT LOCKE.

IN the preparation of a bibliography of secondary education, in which are classified the articles that have appeared in this journal during the past ten years, there have been many temptations to make some very interesting deductions from the surface indications. The one that seemed most apparent was the strength of the classics and of English in the curriculum and the decided weakness of the modern languages. The articles that appear in a journal such as this are fairly representative of the educational situation. Activity shows itself in addresses and in papers, and these make their way to the editor, either solicited or unsolicited. These he endeavors to dispose to the best advantage, having regard to the cosmopolitan taste of his readers and the widely divergent social conditions under which they work and live. It is now some years since an article on the teaching of modern languages reached this office unsolicited. Articles upon the teaching of classics and of English come almost every week, and it would be an easy task to publish a whole year's issue with these two departments alone represented. The significance of this may be explained in various ways. Perhaps one of the most natural explanations is the amazing activity of the teachers of classics in their endeavor to maintain their position in the curriculum. The position formerly occupied through tradition and sentiment is now maintained on reason and effective activity. The student of English has been experiencing good times, as may be seen in the increasing prominence attained during these ten years, and the wave of emotionalism has not yet passed. Mathematics holds about its own, and the natural sciences have been great ground gainers; but somehow the interest in modern languages has been dormant. That they are poorly taught in very many of our schools can hardly be denied, and the marvelous progress abroad in the development of this phase of educational endeavor seems not to have affected us. Just at present England is much agitated over this question, as the excellences of the methods pursued in Germany and in Holland have been explained. A rather unique proposal is that there be a modern language training college established, managed by a board of modern language experts, representing all stages of modern language teaching, from the university professor to the infant-school mistress. The principal is to be chosen by this board, and should be a man of general ability and culture, with an all-round knowledge of modern languages and successful experience as a teacher, trainer, and manager. The

college should be equipped with professors, lecturers, and teachers of both sexes, both English and foreign, for all subjects bearing on the teaching of languages—phonetics, elocution, declamation, grammar, composition, philology, literature, history, and *Realien* generally. A few well-educated young foreigners would be available for purposes of illustration. The occasional services of foreign actors and singers would be found most useful, as well as of foreign lecturers on all kinds of subjects; certain of the regular lecturers, experts in the teaching profession, should be actually engaged as modern-language teachers in some of the neighboring schools, and should take the college students with them (in small groups) to see their ordinary teaching, and occasionally allow them to act as substitutes. This plan of allowing the students to watch the teacher at work is excellent, provided that the teacher explains afterward the general plan and object of the lesson and acts as his own candid critic in estimating its value. Such a college established in England should be kept in close touch with similar institutions abroad. An interchange of teachers might well be arranged, and by means of international literature, correspondence, and visits, much good might be accomplished.

Miss Brebner, whose experience abroad justified this plan which she submitted, made the interesting statement toward the close of her address that what England required was not so much the detailed study of the methods of other peoples as the firm grasp of broad principles on a foundation of thorough knowledge and the training of the practical faculty to apply both in such a way as to make the teaching at once correct and interesting, to give the pupils a good practical knowledge of the foreign language, an enlightened taste for its literature, and, above all, a fair-minded and sympathetic appreciation of the nation itself.

There is, moreover, a lack of homogeneity in the teaching of modern languages. There is the teacher who believes only in translation, another who believes in no translation, another who emphasizes grammar to the exclusion of almost all else, and still another who uses only conversation and values grammar as merely an "illuminant." With such a diversity of methods there must be a sad variety in the results accomplished.